

[연구논문]

From Revolt to Order: The Career of Walter Lippmann's Progressivism, 1913-1914

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I. Introduction

“The battle for us does not lie against crusted prejudice, but against the chaos of a new freedom. This chaos is our real problem.” In *Drift and Mastery*, Walter Lippmann clarified the target of attack that the progressive reformers had to concentrate their energy on. In 1914, he believed that “the real problem” for his contemporary Americans was not a stifling authority restraining individuals’ liberty, but a chaos rampant in the modern United States. For Lippmann, it was the new freedom which gave birth to the chaos of the time. Such awareness of “the chaos of a new freedom” lead Lippmann to try to find an alternative to liberalism, which was, and still is, the most ingrained ideology in America.¹⁾

1) Walter Lippmann, *Drift and Mastery: An Attempt to Diagnose the Current Unrest* (New York, 1914), xx.

Then, what was Lippmann's alternative to liberalism? It was collectivism, or to put it in his more favorite words, "the promise of the trusts." In the 1910s, he sought to formulate a political system which was similar to pluralism and corporatism, and labeled respectively as such by its defenders and critics. By using the terms of collectivism, what Lippmann imagined was a harmoniously ordered society in which all individuals united into groups in accordance with their interests, and participated in the political decision making process by exercising pressure through their listed-groups. When he said in *Drift and Mastery* that the trust movement was "doing what no conspirator or revolutionist could ever do," Lippmann believed that collectivism would be the method to overcome "the chaos of a new freedom." For that reason, Lippmann, after assuring that collectivism was already under way, advised the readers that they should firstly just keep waiting to see how the trust movement brought order out of chaos, then guide it to keep on the right track, rather than wasting energy to resist it.²⁾

Because of his concern over "the chaos of a new freedom" and hope for "the promise of trusts," early Lippmann has been frequently described as a champion of collectivism. Even some previous studies depicted him as a corporate liberal, a collectivist-oriented progressive or a group thinker who has blind faith in technocratic planning. New Left historian R. Jeffery Lustig, for example, describes Lippmann as a pivotal thinker of "corporate liberalism." Considering that "questions

2) Ibid., 50; Theodore J. Lowi had termed the group-based political practice as "the Interest-Group liberalism," see Lowi, *The End of Liberalism: Ideology, Policy, and the Crisis of Public Authority* (New York, 1969).

about the character of organized social conditions lay at the center of the struggles that made up progressivism,” Lustig claims, it is natural that Lippmann, as with the progressives in general, did not see the problem as “having to do with structures of power but with disorganization and waste.” Such a rosy expectation of an organized society and the indifference to the existing power structure led Lippmann to be insensitive to the latent, sometimes explicit, threats of large corporations on individual freedom.³⁾

This mode of explanation is convincing enough that many defenders of Lippmann’s progressivism also partly accept it. While challenging the explanation, some historians, just like the New Left historians did, describe Lippmann as a corporate liberal. But the latter use the term in a more favorable sense. They portray Lippmann as a clear-eyed progressive thinker who keenly grasped the true meaning of collectivism in the early 20th century America. Intellectual historian Howard Brick includes Lippmann in a group of apostles of what he terms “social liberalism.” Believing the abolition of private property as a matter of fact, Brick says, Lippmann predicted that “the future lay with those willing to adopt consciously the tools of collectivism on behalf of promoting the public welfare.”⁴⁾ These accounts provide

3) R. Jeffrey Lustig, *Corporate Liberalism: The Origins of Modern American Political Theory, 1890-1920* (California, 1982), 109, 210; see also Nancy Cohen, *The Reconstruction of American Liberalism, 1865-1914* (Chapel Hill, 2002); for a more orthodox Marx-Leninist point of view, see Brian Lloyd, *Left Out: Pragmatism, Exceptionalism, and the Poverty of American Marxism, 1890-1922* (Baltimore, 1997), ch. 7.

4) Howard Brick, *Transcending Capitalism: Visions of a New Society in Modern American Thought* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 19, 50; see also James Livingston, *Pragmatism and the Political Economy of Cultural Revolution, 1850-1940* (Chapel Hill, 1994), chs. 3, 4, 9; Livingston argues that Lippmann

the reversed image of what the New Left school gave us. However, although the image of Lippmann has been transformed from a naïve dreamer to a foresighted visionary, the fact that he was a champion of collectivism remains intact.

But a group of intellectual historians, who came to recognize the significance of the philosophical influence of American pragmatism on Lippmann's thought, argued that *Drift and Mastery* is a much more sophisticated work than a pamphlet of collectivism. According to them, Lippmann, rather than merely upholding collectivism at the expense of liberalism, carefully drew up a blueprint for a society in which collectivism can be achieved without abandoning liberalism entirely. Renowned intellectual historian David A. Hollinger interprets *Drift and Mastery* as an ambitious work, in which Lippmann pursued both "the revolt against formalism" and "the search for order." "Nowhere," Hollinger maintains, "is the antagonism toward stasis, doctrine, and absolutism more intense than in *Drift and Mastery*, and nowhere is the yearning for control and organization more real." In short, Lippmann tried to reconcile "the conflicting desires for authority and order," and "for liberation and flexibility."⁵⁾

regarded the rise of corporations as a sign of the end of classical capitalism and presented a new vision of society which is based on the social self or the collective identity, not on the self-sufficient individualism.

- 5) David A. Hollinger, "Science and Anarchy: Walter Lippmann's *Drift and Mastery*" in *In the American Province* (Baltimore, 1989), 55, 45. See also James T. Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory: Social Democracy and Progressivism in European and American Thought, 1870-1920* (New York, 1986). It still remains the most comprehensive sketch on the intellectual affinity between progressivism and pragmatism. For the work which focuses on the trajectory of Lippmann's thought, sharing Kloppenberg's perspective, see Barry D. Riccio, *Walter Lippmann: Odyssey of a Liberal* (New Brunswick, 1994); see also George

If there was a fundamental tension between desires for order and for liberation in *Drift and Mastery*, as Hollinger ably shows, then where did the desire for liberation come from? As for the desire for order, one of the abovementioned two conflicting ideals, it might be a natural product of Lippmann's concern for chaos. Given the fact that he announced the battle of progressive reformers should be laid against chaos, it is hardly surprising that Lippmann tried to establish some order. But as for liberation, it was quite a different story. Liberation from something, by definition, inevitably accompanies a kind of revolt against the established order. Why did Lippmann attempt to reconcile the tension between order and liberation, rather than denouncing liberation thoroughly? In other words, why did he struggle to establish a new collectivist order within, not out of, liberalism, which he termed "a period of drift and doubt?"

To answer these questions, I argue, we should be aware of the simple fact that *Drift and Mastery* is not Lippmann's first book. Rather, it is his 1913 book titled *A Preface to Politics*. In the book, Lippmann primarily emphasized the need for liberation from the established order.⁶⁾ Surely, some students already pointed out Lippmann's desire for liberation. Political scientist Heinz Eulau

Cotkin, "Middle-Ground Pragmatists: The Popularization of Philosophy in American Culture," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 55, no. 2 (Apr. 1994), 283-302; James Livingston, "The Politics of Pragmatism," *Social Text*, no. 49 (Winter 1996), 149-172; about the terms of revolt and order, see Morton White, *Social Thought in America: The Revolt Against Formalism* (1947; reprint, Boston, 1957); Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York, 1967).

6) Lippmann, *A Preface to Politics* (1913; reprint, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1962).

described *A Preface to Politics* as “a protest against the empty formalism and legalism of traditional political science”⁷⁾ However, although there are many studies that consider Lippmann’s debut book from their own perspectives, it can hardly be said that the implication of the book has been fully investigated. Most of the studies are more interested in the continuity or similarity between *A Preface to Politics* and *Drift and Mastery* than their differences. These two books are frequently categorized together under the names of “the age of youthful optimism,” Lippmann’s “psychological phase,” or more plainly, his progressive era’s works.⁸⁾

This article is an effort to explore an important but not yet sufficiently explained field in the progressive era’s intellectual history. Challenging the past studies which portrayed Lippmann as a corporate liberal or a collectivist-oriented thinker, it tries to offer a more complex picture of his progressive thought. To do so, it examines the

7) Heinz Eulau, “Mover and Shaker: Walter Lippmann as a Young Man,” *Antioch Review* 11, no. 3 (Sept. 1951), 298. He is a harsh critic of Lippmann. See also idem, “Man against Himself: Walter Lippmann’s Years of Doubt,” *American Quarterly* 4, no. 4 (Winter 1952), 291-304; idem, “Wilsonian Idealist: Walter Lippmann Goes to War,” *Antioch Review* 14, no. 1 (Mar. 1954), 87-108; idem, “From Public Opinion to Public Philosophy: Walter Lippmann’s Classic Reexamined,” *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 15, no. 4 (Jul. 1956), 439-451.

8) “The age of youthful optimism,” see Benjamin F. Wright, *5 Public Philosophies of Walter Lippmann*, (Austin, 1973), ch. 1; James Hoopes sorts Lippmann’s intellectual career into three distinctive phases: “the psychological phase” until the world war I, “the epistemological phase” of the 1920s, and finally “the metaphysical phase” from 1929; see Hoopes, *Community Denied: The Wrong turn of Pragmatic Liberalism* (Ithaca, 1998) ch. 5; Surely, there are some notable exceptions to this line of historiography. See Charles Forcey, *The Crossroads of Liberalism: Croly, Weyl, Lippmann, and the Progressive Era, 1900-1925* (New York, 1961).

implication of *A Preface to Politics* at first, and then compares the book with *Drift and Mastery*. By giving adequate consideration on the similarities and differences between those two books, this article demonstrates both the protean and coherent nature of Lippmann's progressivism. Lastly, this article attempts to situate Lippmann's progressivism within its intellectual lineage. Lippmann's persistent effort to reconcile order and freedom may show that many intellectual elements of his later thought, especially that his advocacy of individual freedom was not a complete contrast to the nature of his progressive era's works.⁹⁾ The close analysis on the how desire for order and for liberation interacted in Lippmann's thought in the progressive era, I hope, may throw some new light on the historiography of Lippmann's intellectual journey.¹⁰⁾

II. Revolt against Tradition

In the 1910s, when Lippmann began his career as a progressive

9) Lippmann's hope for collectivism presented a striking contrast with the characteristic of his later thought, which is well known for its strong advocacy of individualist or anti-statist version of liberalism. About his later thought see Lippmann, *An Inquiry into the Principles of The Good Society* (1973; reprint, Connecticut, 1973); idem., *Essays in the public philosophy* (New York, 1955); see also Angus Burgin, *The Great Persuasion: Reinvention Free Markets since the Depression* (Harvard University Press, 2012).

10) More on Lippmann's position in the American intellectual history, see William E. Leuchtenburg, "Walter Lippmann's *Drift and Mastery*," in Walter Lippmann, *Drift and Mastery: An Attempt to Diagnose the Current Unrest* (1914; reprint, N.J.: Englewood Cliffs, 1961); a valuable biographical work on Lippmann's entire career, see Ronald Steel, *Walter Lippmann and the American Century* (1980; reprint, New Brunswick, 1998).

thinker, the United States was at the crossroad of political, economic, cultural, and intellectual transition. During the late 19th and early 20th century, witnessing the ascendancy of huge corporations and large interest groups, Americans came to know that they lived in a totally different capitalist society from what Adam Smith in the 18th century had imagined. Corporate capitalism, the new form of capitalism based upon a new set of principles such as organization, administration, and management, eroded the fundamental principles of classical liberalism including competition, individual independence, and private property. To handle the unfamiliar economic system, a group of intellectuals, who associated under the banner of progressivism, entered into the political realm.¹¹⁾ The greatest challenge for the progressives was the entrenched American liberal tradition. For example, Political theorist Louis Hartz describes American history as a triumphal story of *Lockian* liberalism. “This fixed, dogmatic liberalism of a liberal way

11) An excellent overview on the meanings of progressivism, see Daniel Rodgers, “In Search of Progressivism,” *Reviews in American History* 10, no. 4, (Dec., 1982), 113-132; see also David M. Kennedy, “Overview: The Progressive Era,” *Historian*, 37, no.3 (May 1975), 453-468; Michael McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: the Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America, 1870-1920* (New York, 2003). In the progressive era, the adjectives ‘liberal’ and ‘progressive’ became used to refer reformers who criticized the Gilded Age’s culture and thought, such as Victorian morality, laissez-faire capitalism, and William Graham Sumner’s social Darwinism. The ‘intellectual,’ a neologism coined by Emil Zola in the fuss of Dreyfus affair, attained a political meaning in the late 19th century. According to William James, who introduced the neologism into the American lexicon, the intellectual is an educator who presents a vision of new society and guides the public onto the road to the new society. See Bender, *New York Intellectual: a History of Intellectual Life in New York City, from 1750 to the Beginnings of Our Own Time* (Baltimore, 1988). A narrative on how liberals and radicals associated with each other, see Doug Rossinow, *Vision of Progress: the Left-Liberal Tradition in America* (Philadelphia, 2008).

of life,” he asserts, and dominated the entire American political thought.¹²⁾ Given the existence of this die-hard liberal tradition, although Americans became aware the advantage of collectivism, it is hard to suppose that Americans would surrender liberalism for the sake of collectivism. The only remaining option to the progressive intellectuals is to grope toward a middle course between chaotic liberalism and coercive collectivism. Therefore, they tried to remold liberalism from its old, classical, and laissez-faire version into new, social and reform liberalism, rather than discarding liberalism altogether.¹³⁾

What was the strategy of progressive intellectual to go through the middle way between between collectivism and liberalism? James T. Kloppenberg, Harvard intellectual historian, demonstrates that American pragmatism provided a philosophical ground for the progressives. According to Kloppenberg, discarding accepted distinction “between revolutionary socialism and *laissez-faire* liberalism in politics,” both the European and American progressives, such as Max Weber, Leonhard T. Hobhouse, and John Dewey

12) Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America* (1955; reprint, New York, 1991), 9. Hartz argues that there were no feudalism or true revolution in American history, and therefore neither reactionary nor revolutionary could develop their own ideology. The term of ‘Lockian’ liberalism infers that Americans appropriate as well as revere John Locke’s ideals such as property rights and rugged individualism. A criticism on Hartz’s liberal tradition, see Kloppenberg, “In Retrospect: Louis Hartz’s *The Liberal Tradition in America*,” *Reviews in American History* 29, no. 3, (Sep., 2001); Rogers M. Smith. “Beyond Tocqueville, Myrdal, and Hartz: The Multiple Traditions in America,” *The American Political Science Review* 87, no. 3. (Sep., 1993).

13) The transformation of liberalism in the early 20th century, see Forcey, *The Crossroad of Liberalism*; About a broader sketch, see Eric Foner, *The Story of American Freedom* (New York, 1999).

“conversed toward a *via media* in philosophy and toward the political theories of social democracy and progressivism.” Rather than depending on a certain ideological dogma, they employed the concept of *hypothesis* on a social issue, examined it through experience, and tried to resolve the tension between collectivism and liberalism.¹⁴⁾ William James, the founder of pragmatism, led Lippmann into this progressive-pragmatist camp. During Lippmann’s Harvard years, James taught him to focus on reality, experience and power, rather than sticking to eternal truths or fixed principles. Following James’s lessons, Lippmann came to agree on the maxim of pragmatism that “treats even its most firmly established conclusions as the most unstable of hypotheses.”¹⁵⁾

Given the fact that Lippmann himself characterized *A Preface to*

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- 14) Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory*, 3; More on the intellectual affinity between progressivism and pragmatism, see Robert B. Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy* (Ithaca, 1991); Dorothy Ross, *The Origins of American Social Science* (Cambridge; New York, 1991), Part III-IV; Andrew Feffer, *The Chicago Pragmatists and American Progressivism* (New York, 1993). Cornel West, *The American Evasion of Philosophy: A Genealogy of Pragmatism* (Wisconsin, 1989); Casey N. Blake, *Beloved Community: the Cultural Criticism of Randolph Bourne, Van Wyck Brooks, Waldo Frank & Lewis Mumford* (Chapel Hill, 1990); Louis Menand, *The Meta Physical Club* (1st paperback ed. New York, 2002); John P. Diggins lists the contested virtues that Lippmann sought to in the 1910s: “disinterestedness and commitment, reason and imagination, spontaneity and efficiency, rules and purposes, discipline and desire, and, above all, authority and freedom.” John P. Diggins, *The Promise of Pragmatism: Modernism and the Crisis of Knowledge and Authority* (Chicago, 1994), 325.
- 15) About James’ philosophical influences on Lippmann, see Ruth Anna Putnam(ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to William James* (Cambridge, 1997), 322-330; Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory*, 318. It is said that Wallas’s elitist reformism was most clearly revealed from *Drift and Mastery*, and Santayana’s cosmopolitanism and skepticism stood out from the 1920s.

Politics, as a study on “James’s idea of uncertainty,” it is undeniable that the philosophical leitmotif of the book came from Jamesian pragmatism. Compared to his later works, however, *A Preface to Politics* had a distinctive feature that past studies have overlooked. Here, Lippmann argued that the task to establish a new order would be possible only after achieving liberation from the old order. It was quite different from *Drift and Mastery* in which Lippmann devoted almost entire pages to articulate a blueprint of new order. If the battle of his 1914 book did not lie against old prejudice “but against the chaos of a new freedom,” that of *A Preface to Politics* primarily lied against the old prejudice, i.e. deep-rooted liberal tradition.¹⁶⁾

In the first part of the book (chs. 1-3), Lippmann’s intellectual guides were neither James, nor other Harvard professors who had a huge effect on him, such as George Santayana and Graham Wallas. Rather, the guides were Friedrich Nietzsche, Sigmund Freud, and Karl Marx; thinkers more often called liberators than reformers. Among the three, Nietzsche’s influences stands out first. In the initial chapter, titled “Routineer and Inventor,” applying Nietzsche’s critique of the foundationalism, Lippmann urges for liberation from the traditional morality. The followers of traditional moral principles, or “the routineers,” indiscriminately applied simple dichotomy between good and evil on every political issue. For Lippmann, however, it is “the greatest American superstition.” He believes that destruction of such dichotomy is the precondition to understanding the true meaning of politics. “Politics,” he states, “does not exist for the sake of

16) Lippmann, *A Preface to Politics*.

demonstrating the superior righteousness of anybody. ... In fact, before you can begin to think about politics at all you have to abandon the notion that there is a war between good men and bad men.” In other words, “there is no way of establishing any clear-cut difference in politics between the angels and the imps.” To defy the absolute moral principle, Lippmann, revealing his strong inclination to Theodore Roosevelt, emphasizes the role of creative individual politician, or “the political inventor.” The inventor, Lippmann’s own *Übermensch*, denies the notion that institutions, systems or principles have intrinsic virtues, and treats them as mere instruments of human purposes. Politicians should serve “the ideals of human feelings, not the tendencies of mechanical things.” Like Nietzsche harshly condemned “slave morality” because it weighed good or evil actions solely based on its intention, and proposed new morality which considered the consequences of actions, Lippmann clearly sets forth the idea that before building a new order which is supposed to serve the purposes of human, it needed that liberation from old morality. As intellectual historian Jennifer Ratner-Rosenhagen well argues, Nietzsche’s anti-foundationalism guided Lippmann to take part in the early 20th-century intellectual current of “revolt against formalism.”¹⁷⁾

Lippmann’s hostility to old morality, leads him to attack Freud’s most hated enemy, *taboo*. In the chapter titled “The Taboo,” he delves into the question of human nature. After characterizing the taboo as “the emptiest of all the impositions from on top,” Lippmann

17) Lippmann, *A Preface to Politics*, 7-8. About Nietzsche’s influences on American intellectuals including, see Jennifer Ratner-Rosenhagen, *American Nietzsche: A History of an Icon and His Ideas* (Chicago, 2011), especially on Lippmann, see chs. 4-5.

argues that someone who most stubbornly clings to the taboo and, by doing so, most persistently represses the expression of human impulses is none other than the routineer.

The routineer is the first to decry every radical proposal as ‘against human nature.’ But the stand-pat mind has forfeited all right to speak for human nature. It has devoted the centuries to torturing men’s instincts, stamping on them, passing law against them, lifting its eyebrows at the thought of them -doing everything but trying to understand them.

Instead of repressing all the impulses, Lippmann recommends that politicians “must deal with actual people.” Demanding the “new political philosophy” that serves actual people, Lippmann has in mind, as we shall see, is Jamesian pragmatism. But the task of searching for new order should be waited until liberation from the old taboos is accomplished. Like the earlier chapter, the structure of this chapter clearly reveals the sequences of Lippmann’s plan: liberation first and order next.¹⁸⁾

In the following chapters, Marx, the last of the three liberators, steps in. The influence of Marx on Lippmann is never straightforward. In fact, Lippmann’s comments on Marx and, especially, “Marxian” socialism are generally critical. But still, considering the fact that Lippmann once was the first president of newly-born Harvard Socialist Club, it can be easily expected that Marxist criticism of the *laissez-faire* liberalism is quite a familiar

18) Lippmann, *A Preface to Politics*, 34-35. Because of this book, Freud actually invited Lippmann to Austria.

About Freud’s influences on Lippmann, see Steel, *Walter Lippmann*, 45-50.

topic for him. Before directly attacking the *laissez-faire* liberalism, Lippmann begins the chapter with deploring what he considers the problem of his times: the absence of political philosophy.

The revolutionists who see the misery of the country as a deliberate and fiendish plot overestimate the bad will, the intelligence and the singleness of purpose in the ruling class. Business and political leaders don't mean badly; the trouble with them is that most of the time they don't mean anything.

Lippmann argues that the absence of political philosophy originated from the blind faith to profit motive. The faith to profit motive discourages people to articulate a more complex political philosophy, because its believers often regard it as a panacea for every political issue. At this point, Lippmann harshly denounces dogmatic *laissez-faire* theorists as follows: “We have actually pretended that the work of extracting a living from nature could be done most successfully by shortsighted money-makers encouraged by money-spending wives.” In other words, the profit motive is the foundation of *laissez-faire* capitalism, and also it has hindered the effort to promote “the civilizing possibilities of a new set of motives in business.” Like the previous chapters, here Lippmann relies on James’s pragmatism and Wallas’s Fabian socialism to establish a more civilized order. But still, it is definite that the new civilized order is possible only after most Americans are “released from a stupid fixation upon the silly little ideals of accumulating dollars and filling their neighbor’s eye.”¹⁹⁾

19) Lippmann, *A Preface to Politics*, 45-46, 49. The socialism that Lippmann pursued in the Harvard years was a kind of pragmatist version socialism. A

In this regard, until when Lippmann wrote *A Preface to Politics*, he took part in the intellectual current that Morton White terms “revolt against formalism.” Even though White excludes Lippmann from that current mainly due to his later thought that revealed the strong advocacy to natural right, higher law and individualism, we should not oversee the fact that Lippmann began his career as a thinker who cried for liberation from tradition.²⁰⁾ At the end of the first part of the book, Lippmann most clearly expresses his desire for liberation.

The old effort was to harness mankind to abstract principles--liberty, justice or equality--and to deduce institutions from these high-sounding words. It did not succeed because human nature was contrary and restive. The new effort proposes to fit creeds and institutions to the wants of men, to satisfy their impulses as fully and beneficially as possible.²¹⁾

In *A Preface to Politics*, especially in the first part of the book, Lippmann shows an open hostility to conventional morality, to repression of human impulses, and to the laissez-faire capitalism. And that is why historian Henry F. May depicts *A Preface to Politics* as “the most smashing blow yet received by American progressivism of

study that favorably esteems pragmatist version of socialism as a middle way between the naïve revolutionary and the fatalist evolutionary, see Mark Pittenger, “Science, Culture and the New Socialist Intellectuals before World War I,” *American Studies* 28 (Spring, 1987), 73-91; see also Riccio, *Walter Lippmann: Odyssey of a Liberal*, ch. 1.

20) White, *Social Thought in America*; White describes Lippmann as a typical dissenter to the intellectual current of revolt against formalism, mainly due to Lippmann’s 1955 book, *The Public Philosophy*; White’s treatment on Lippmann, see his long Epilogue of 1957 edition of *Social Thought in America*.

21) Lippmann, *A Preface to Politics*, 84.

the dominant variety.”²²⁾

Lippmann, of course, never stops here. Liberation is not the end of the story, however significant it may be. In fact, it is the beginning of the story in his more ambitious plan for new order. Ironically, the first step to search for a new order is to understand the simple fact that the fall of traditional order might cause its own problems. If there is no the universal morality of any kind, how can we sort out good from evil? If there is no such thing as tradition, what would be a principle on which our political decisions are based? To answer such questions, Lippmann suggests, citing James’s concept of “a moral equivalent of war,” to find out the moral equivalent of evil. “Instead of tabooing our impulses,” he states, “we must redirect them. Instead of trying to crush badness we must turn the power behind it to good account.” It is the new political philosophy that focuses not on repression of evil but on expression of good. The progressive reformer, Lippmann warns, will fail, unless he can invent “something which substitutes attractive virtues for attractive vices.”²³⁾

Here, Lippmann directly goes to pragmatism. To find “a moral equivalent to evil” or in other words, to formulate new political philosophy without absolute foundation, he employs the essential concept of pragmatism, *hypothesis*. Lippmann persuades the readers

22) Henry F. May, *The End of American Innocence; a Study of the First Years of Our Own Time, 1912-1917*, (1959; reprint, Chicago, 1964), 320; May regards the mainstream American progressives shared many feature with the old dominant American culture. See also Forcey, *The Crossroad of Liberalism*, ch. 3; Eulau, “Mover and Shaker: Walter Lippmann as a Young Man;” Leon Fink, *Progressive Intellectuals and the Dilemmas of Democratic Commitment* (Cambridge, 1997), ch., 1.

23) Lippmann, *A Preface to Politics*, 39-40, 42.

that instead of wasting time to scout around for an absolute foundation which restricts every human impulse, they should formulate a good hypothesis, whenever they come to political issues.

There is, of course, no infallible touchstone by which we can tell offhand. No one need hope for an easy certainty either here or anywhere else in human affairs. No one is absolved from experiment and constant revision. Yet there are some hypotheses that prima facie deserve more attention than others.²⁴⁾

Here, Hypothesis is applied as an instrument to liberate human impulses from the traditional morality and abstract principles.

A particularly arresting feature of *A Preface to Politics* is that Lippmann constantly uses the concept of hypothesis in the following chapters, which have a very different implication from the previous chapters. While he devotes the first part of book calling for liberation of man from the tradition, in the second part (chs. 4-6), Lippmann concentrates his attention on human epistemological limitations. The epistemological condition of modern America that a liberated man had to be faced with was highly unfavorable to him. Lippmann says as follows:

The distance between what we know and what we need to know appears to be greater than ever. Plato and Aristotle thought in terms of ten thousand homogeneous villagers; we have to think in terms of a hundred million people of all races and all traditions.

24) Ibid., 53.

To overcome this epistemological gap between “what we know and what we need to know,” Lippmann presents a kind of epistemological vessels, such as abstraction, generalization, theories and symbols. “Between us and the realities of social life, we build up a mass of generalizations, abstract ideas, ancient glories, and personal wishes. They simplify and soften experience.” By doing so, men can perceive a complex modern society as a simpler one. But the problem is that such epistemological vessels frequently distort the realities themselves. Clinging to concepts like liberty, equality or justice, men too often ignore “the realities of social life” reflected by these concepts. “We decide beforehand that things must fit a few preconceived ideas. And when they don’t, which is most of the time, we deny truth, falsify facts, and prefer the coddling of our theory to any deeper understanding of the real problem before us.” Men can neither understand the world as a whole nor accept the world as it is.²⁵⁾

What Lippmann suggests to resolve tension between the desire for liberation and the awareness of human epistemological limitations is the concept of hypothesis. The modern Americans who are faced with such a big and complex society should understand that knowledge and action are indispensable to each other. According to Lippmann, if every American is fully aware of the fact, then he is able to employ his own hypothesis as a guide of action, and it may allow him, in spite of his fallibility and limitation, to explore the strange modern world.

25) *Ibid.*, 82, 129.

We have to act on what we believe, on half-knowledge, illusion and error. Experience itself will reveal our mistakes; research and criticism may convert them into wisdom. ... Conduct and theory react upon each other. *Hypothesis is confirmed and modified by action, and action is guided by hypothesis.*²⁶⁾ (Emphasis is mine.)

As the paragraph clearly shows, the concept of hypothesis, a mixture of personal belief, half-knowledge, illusion, and error, is an imperfect, but still indispensable tool to acquire wisdom. Lippmann believes that modern Americans are able to have some wisdom through thorough experience, research, and criticism. Here the theory proves its own significance. Theories, according to him, are not a panacea to solve all the social problems at once. They are “much more like village lamp-posts than they are like the sun, that they were made to light up a particular path, obviate certain dangers, and aid a peculiar mode of life.” However,

if the thinker sees at all deeply into the life of his own time his theoretical system will rest upon observation of human nature. That remains as a residue of wisdom long after his reasoning and his concrete program have passed into limbo. ... Wisdom remains; theory passes.

Whereas theory is a hypothesis which stands on limited knowledge, wisdom is the universal virtue that all individuals should learn by examining the hypothesis through experiences in “the realities of social life.” And by applying that wisdom, the new order that Lippmann imagines will be established.²⁷⁾

26) Ibid., 84.

27) Ibid., 158-9; see also Lippmann’s mention on the ability of “political inventor,”

The new order is collectivism. In the later part of book (chs. 7-9), Lippmann, employing the concepts of wisdom and hypothesis, proposes a collectivist political system to deal with the ascendancy of corporate capitalism. By entering to the debate over collectivism, he urges to rearrange the structure of American politics from the two-major-party system into a collectivist one. “The break-up of the parties into expressive groups would be a ventilation of our national life. ... The false bonds are best broken: with their collapse would come a release of social energy into political discussion.” For Lippmann, the two-party system is one of the most rigid old order, and it thwarts all the constructive efforts to introduce new order.

The rigidity of the two-party system is disastrous: it ignores issues without settling them, dulls and wastes the energies of active groups, and chokes off the protests which should find a civilized expression in public life.

For Lippmann, collectivism, a political practice which encourages individuals to unite each other into groups, and allows them to influence political issues by backing of the power of their own groups, is the alternative to old and rigid the American two-party system.²⁸⁾

The fundamental reason Lippmann supports collectivism is his awareness of human epistemological limitation. He assumes that individual’s range of attention is inevitably too narrow to cover the extremely diverse issues in modern society. “We are not all

77-78.

28) *Ibid.*, 198-9.

immediately interested in all problems,” he maintains, “our attention wanders unless the people who are interested compel us to listen.” There is no party that properly represents the whole nation simply because that no party-platform fully satisfies “rich and poor, black and white, Eastern creditor and Western farmer” at the same time.

A party that tried to answer every conflicting interest would stand still because people were pulling in so many different directions. ... One comprehensive party platform fusing every interest is impossible and undesirable. What is both possible and desirable is that every group interest should be represented in public life.²⁹⁾

If the role of groups in politics cannot be ignored any longer and modern men have to live with these groups, they should have their own hypotheses. In order to establish new order among the entrenched interest groups, the only thing that men can do is to understand every opinion, which is inescapably affected by special interests, not as an evident truth, but as an unstable hypothesis, and through social experiences to learn some wisdom that allows them to distinguish the better hypothesis from the worse.

This is the way of establishing a new order in the absence of traditional morality and old ideology. In other words, this is the wisdom of American pragmatism. At the end of *A Preface to Politics*, Lippmann adeptly summed up the core of wisdom as follows: “There is no such thing as Democracy; there are a number of more or less democratic experiments which are not subject to

29) Ibid., 209, 217.

wholesale eulogy or condemnation.” Lippmann, as Kloppenberg properly describes, agreed that “just as scientists must collectively distinguish between true and false hypotheses, so societies must distinguish between true and false ideas.” In 1913, Lippmann considered democracy as an endless process of verifying multiple hypotheses. And it was the process of making the new order that Lippmann imagined.³⁰⁾

Before going on the next chapter of this article, it deserves to be mentioned that Lippmann constantly called for liberation from the yoke of tradition in *A Preface to Politics*. He was sharply aware that his contemporary Americans at the historical turning point of tradition-to-modern. “We live in a revolutionary period,” Lippmann states, “and nothing is so important as to be aware of it.” Truly, Lippmann’s age is “a revolutionary period.” However, he also firmly believed that the revolution was still uncompleted. The last sentences of the book allude to Lippmann’s deep concern about it. “If men remain slaves either to ideas or to other men, it will be because they do not know they are slaves. Their intention is to be free.” For Lippmann, liberation from the tradition was not yet accomplished in 1913.

30) Ibid., 220; Kloppenberg, *Uncertain Victory*, 384; see also Lippmann, “And Congress,” (10 March 1917) *New Republic* in *Early Writings*, ed. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. (New York, 1970), 151.

III. Mastering the Great Society

The year of *Drift and Mastery* came out, it was a critical turning point for Lippmann's progressive thought. During just one year between 1913 and 1914, Lippmann drastically grew away from one branch of progressivism that emphasized liberation from the tradition, and, as he confided to his diary, came to find "less and less sympathy with the revolutionists and increasing interest in administrative problems." Lippmann concisely depicted this turn as such: "I come definitely nearer to the Progressives."³¹ Using the term of progressives, he referred to a specific faction of the progressives who associated around former U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt and called themselves the New Nationalists. Roosevelt and the New Nationalists who put together the Progressive Party in 1912, believed that only a powerful government, by guaranteeing social justice and regulating economic exploitation, was able to achieve public welfare. Herbert Croly, a prime intellectual architect of the New Nationalism, elegantly presented the goal and the method of the New Nationalism: it was a political philosophy that adopted Hamiltonian means to achieve Jeffersonian end.³²

The political philosophy which sustained whole intellectual edifice of *Drift and Mastery* was the New Nationalism. In 1914, Lippmann, then only a twenty-five-year-old young man, was already one of key figures among the New Nationalists. If *A Preface to Politics* had

31) Lippmann wrote in his diary that "the winter of 1914 is an important change for me." See Steel, Walter Lippmann, 79.

32) Herbert Croly, *The Promise of American Life* (1909; reprint, Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965).

made Lippmann as a *wunderkind* of the progressive camp, *Drift and Mastery* made him as a kind of superstar of the New Nationalist intellectuals. Even Theodore Roosevelt himself praised *Drift and Mastery* as follows: “No man who wishes seriously to study our present social, industrial and political life can afford not to read it through and through and ponder and digest it.”³³⁾ Many intellectual historians share this mode of appraisal. For example, Hollinger recognizes that Lippmann’s *Drift and Mastery* is “in any event, right in the middle of ‘progressive social thought’ by almost everyone’s reckoning.” In short, it can be adequately said that very few books attracted more attention both from his contemporary progressive intellectuals and the historians of progressivism than Lippmann’s 1914 *magnum opus*.³⁴⁾

Among many other eulogistic comments on *Drift and Mastery*, Randolph Bourne, one of intellectual leaders of the Young Americans in the 1910s, provided the most valuable one that touched the heart of the book. It is “a book one would have given one’s soul to have written,” Bourne wrote, it deals with “what to do with your emancipation after you have got it.”³⁵⁾ At 1914, Lippmann, as Bourne noticed, was no longer interested in such things as emancipation,

33) Roosevelt’s comments quoted in Steel, *Walter Lippmann*, 77-79.

34) Ibid.

35) Bourne’s assessment on *Drift and Mastery*, see Randolph Bourne, *Randolph Bourne: The Radical Will, Selected Writings 1911-1918*, ed. Olaf Hansen (Berkeley, 1992), 20; see also Christopher Lasch, *The New Radicalism in America, 1889-1963: the Intellectual as a Social Type* (1965; reprint, New York: W. W. Norton, 1986). 78; more about the “Young Americans,” see Casey Nelson Blake, *Beloved Community: the Cultural Criticism of Randolph Bourne, Van Wyck Brooks, Waldo Frank, & Lewis Mumford* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990).

liberation, and revolt. It never means that Lippmann came to be hostile toward the desire for liberation from tradition. Rather, it simply means that he believed that liberation already had been fully accomplished. In other words, the task of *Drift and Mastery* was different from that of *A Preface to Politics*. Although most of the philosophical premises of the 1913 book, such as the uncertainty of truth, human epistemological limitations, and the application of the concept of hypothesis in social and political issues, remained intact in *Drift and Mastery*, but a premise that was once crucial in Lippmann's thought certainly faded away. In his new book, Lippmann no longer neither feared nor hated deep-rooted tradition. On the contrary, what he concerned with was the fate of modern American who was thoroughly uprooted from tradition.³⁶⁾

Indeed, Lippmann begins *Drift and Mastery* by clarifying that liberation from the traditional order is not what should be achieved in the future but the condition already given. "If we flounder," he maintains, "it is not because the old order is strong, but because the new one is weak." Thus the issues that modern Americans faced are inevitably "very different from those of the last century and a half." Lippmann lucidly sums up the issues as follows:

Those who went before inherited a conservatism and overthrew it; we inherit freedom, and have to use it. The sanctity of property, the patriarchal family, hereditary caste, the dogma of sin, obedience to authority, -the rock of the ages, in brief, has been blasted for us. Those who are young today are born into a world in which the foundations of the older order survive

36) Lippmann, *Drift and Mastery*;

only as habits or by default. So Americans can carry through their purposes when they have them.³⁷⁾

Such insight that old order was already in demise leads Lippmann to a very different path from that he has walked on so far. The single most noticeable aspect in the first part of *Drift and Mastery* (chs. 1-7) is the fact that Lippmann casts the muckrakers and the populists as his two main villains. Whereas “the routineer,” the prime target of his criticism in *A Preface to Politics*, were the defender of old order, the muckrakers and the populists are, after all, honest reformers. In other words, if the routineer thwarted the reformist efforts to build a new order “from above,” Lippmann’s new villains, quite contrastingly, by distilling complex problems of modern society into simpler ones, mislead and pervert reformist energy “from below.”

Lippmann, as himself was once an apprentice to Lincoln Steffens, one of the most influential writers in the muckraker movement, well knows the limitations of the movement. He accuses the muckrakers that they routinely overstated the government’s negative aspects, especially corruptions of the machine politics, while ignoring its positive roles in modern society, such as protecting its people from economic tyranny and maintaining democratic order. However, at the opening of the 20th century, Lippmann argues, “democratic people had begun to see much greater possibilities in the government than ever before.” In the same vein, he continues his criticism toward populists who indiscriminately dismissed the trust movement.

37) Ibid., xvi, xxii-xxiii.

Opposing populists, most notably William Jennings Bryan who demanded breaking up all the trusts, Lippmann asserts that “the trusts are organizing private property out of existence, are altering its nature so radically that very little remains but the title and the ancient theory.” He believes that there is no fundamental difference between conservatives who blindly cherished the myth of profit motive and the populists who retrospectively longed for another myth of independent yeomen and small local communities that were supposed to once have existed in traditional American society. In short, neither the muckrakers, nor the populists realized the significance of trust movement in the 20th century United States.³⁸⁾

In contrast to these backward looking reformers, Lippmann understands the ascendancy of collectivism as a general and irresistible trend of his times. Therefore, his main concern is not liberation from the old order, which was accomplished by the trust movement.³⁹⁾ In *Drift and Mastery*, Lippmann firmly focuses his attention on the question of how to make the trust movement coexist with democracy, instead of futilely resisting the irresistible trend. In other words, “The real problem of collectivism,” Lippmann argues, “is the difficulty of combining popular control with administrative power.”

38) Ibid., 18-19, 50.

39) Ibid., 50; here, Lippmann mentions as the significance of the trust movement that it “is doing what no conspirator or revolutionist could ever do: it is sucking the life out of private property.”

Private property is no part of the issue. For any industry which was ready for collectivism would have abolished private property before the question arose. What would remain for discussion would be the conflict between democracy and centralized authority.

For Lippmann, the issue is clear. How does one resolve the conflicts between popular control and administrative power, between democracy and centralized authority?⁴⁰⁾

In the latter part of *Drift and Mastery*, Lippmann digs deeper into this issue. To resolve the conflicts, according to him, modern Americans, first of all, should pay more attention to the gap between “a big world and little men.” Lippmann’s awareness of the gap reveals the intellectual influence of English Fabian socialist Graham Wallas. In his 1914 book, *The Great Society*, which was dedicated to his beloved student, i.e. Lippmann, Wallas portrayed the transformation of the social environment from small local communities to a big, complex, and impersonal “Great Society.” Following Wallas, Lippmann believes that the modern industrial society is too big, too complex, and too fleet to fully grasp by men. He depicts this condition as follows: “We have changed our environment more quickly than we know how to change ourselves.” According to Lippmann, the central difficulty of democratic polity originated from this epistemological gap between “big word and little men.” In other words, it is never an easy task for little men to govern themselves in this big, complex and ever-changing society.⁴¹⁾

40) Ibid., 62.

41) Ibid., 189; about relationship between Wallas and Lippmann, see Martin J. Wiener, *Between Two Worlds: The Political Thought of Graham Wallas* (Oxford,

At this point, we can notice the fact that Americans faced the familiar dilemma that we have seen in *A Preface to Politics*. The exact same people who are supposed to control “centralized authority” are under the most unfavorable conditions more than ever. For that reason, Lippmann, before presenting the strategy to control centralized authority, frankly admits the difficulty of self-government. “Men,” Lippmann states, “will do almost anything but govern themselves. They don’t want the responsibility. In the main, they are looking for some benevolent guardian.” However, Lippmann is well aware the fact that there is no such thing as a benevolent guardian. Modern men, who are already liberated from the traditional authority should deal with everything themselves. Lippmann ably describes the destiny of modern men:

We have lost authority. We are ‘emancipated’ from an ordered world. We drift. The loss of something outside ourselves which we can obey is a revolutionary break with our habits. Never before have we had to rely so completely upon ourselves. ... It is with emancipation that real tasks begin, and liberty is a searching challenge, for it takes away the guardianship of the master and the comfort of the priest. The iconoclasts didn’t free us. They threw us into the water, and now we have to swim. (Emphasis in original)⁴²)

Just like Max Weber termed such “emancipation” as “the disenchantment of the world,” Lipmann names it *liberalism*. “There is a great gap between the overthrow of authority and the creation of a

1971), chap. 6; Robert Frankel, *Observing America: Commentary of British Visitors to the United States, 1890-1950* (Madison, 2007), 104-8.

42) *Ibid.*, 196-7.

substitute. That gap is called liberalism: a period of drift and doubt. We are in it today.” Both the inevitability and the difficulty of democratic self-government is derived from liberalism. Critical spirits, a product of modern liberalism, deprived every monumental creed of its claim for certainty. After beginning “a period of drift and doubt,” all the footholds of traditional authority, such as moral principles, religious dogmas, and ideological doctrines, became mere objects of human’s criticism. In this respect, it can be said that modern liberalism liberated men from traditional authority. But the problem is that liberalism, while overthrowing the traditional authority so thoroughly, did not teach the liberated men how to live without that authority. Modern men are caught between Scylla and Charybdis. They are confronted with the following dilemma: liberalism destroyed all the traditional authorities which we can simply trust and follow, thus self-government become the only principle to be applied when establishing a new order, but that very self-government cannot be achieved by liberalism alone. Lippmann compares his contemporary Americans who face the dilemma to immigrants.

All of us are immigrants spiritually. We are all of us immigrants in the industrial world, and we have no authority to lean upon. We are an uprooted people ... The modern man is not yet settled in his world. It is strange to him, terrifying, alluring, and incomprehensibly big.

When Lippmann designs his plan for new order, as the paragraph obviously demonstrates, he has in mind that Americans are uprooted from their tradition rather than deep-rooted in it.⁴³⁾

Although he confesses the difficulty of self-government, we should

not equate it with a sign that Lippmann denies the possibility of democratic order. Rather he begins to search for a new order directly after confessing the difficulty of self-government. To do so, he argues, every American should have his own *vision* for a new order. Here, Lippmann, as he did in *A Preface to Politics*, once again relies upon American pragmatism. Indeed, Lippmann uses the term of vision as a synonym for the concept of hypothesis. The most important role of vision in this book, as well as of hypothesis in *A Preface to Politics*, is that it brings some order out of chaos. In the introduction, Lippmann clearly explains how the concept of vision works as follows:

We make our *vision* and hold it ready for any amendment that experience suggests. It is not a fixed picture, a row of shiny ideals which we can exhibit to mankind, and say: Achieve these or be damned. ... it will be a human hypothesis, not an oracular revelation. But if the hypothesis is honest and alive it should cast a little light upon our chaos.⁴⁴⁾

In short, Lippmann understands vision as a kind of provisional blueprint for a new order.

43) Lippmann, *Drift and Mastery*, 211.

44) *Ibid.*, xxii-xxiii; Because this paragraph, I think, is the most pivotal section of the entire *Drift and Mastery*, I would like to add the remaining part of the paragraph here in the footnote. Lippmann states as follows: "It should help us to cease revolving in the mere routine of the present or floating in a private utopia. For a vision of latent hope would be woven of vigorous strands; it would be concentrated on the crucial points of contemporary life, on the living zone where the present is passing into the future. It is the region where thought and action count. Too far ahead there is nothing but your dream; just behind, there is nothing but your memory. But in the unfolding present, man can be creative if his vision is gathered from the promise of actual things."

The remaining tasks for progressive intellectuals, Lippmann believes, are persuading Americans to have their own visions and preparing a more favorable condition to do that. To do so, Americans, above all else, should overcome the mortal fear of failure. Lippmann asks himself: If every mistake leads to a collapse of individual life, who dares to take action solely based on an uncertain hypothesis, and who dares to take even one step forward to establish a new order according to his own vision? To overcome the fear of failure, Lippmann assures the readers that “A mistake matters far less than most of us imagine: the world is not brittle, but elastic.” This confidence—a mistake would not be fatal—is grounded on the plain reality that the United States is the wealthiest country in the world. Lippmann thinks that only in the midst of plenty, “the imagination becomes ambitious, rebellion against misery is at last justified, and dreams have a basis in fact.” In other words, he considers the abundance as a necessary condition for achieving self-government, and for establishing a new order.

The blunders are not fatal: American wealth has hardly been tapped. And that is why America still offers the greatest promise to democracy. The first item in the program of self-government is to drag the whole population well above the misery line.⁴⁵⁾

In Lippmann’s scheme for a new order, self-government and abundance, or the principle and the condition of the order, are indissolubly linked with each other because the order needs a

45) *Ibid.*, 249, 253-4.

standard of living which is high enough to provide for Americans to manage trial and error.

After convincing Americans that they live in the blessed land for democracy, Lippmann, in the chapter, titled “Mastery,” or what I think is the most brilliant part in *Drift and Mastery*, presents his own vision for a new order. He reaffirms that “tradition will not work in the complexity of modern life” and “America is preeminently the country where there is practical substance in Nietzsche’s advice that we should live not for our fatherland but for our children’s land.”

To do so this men have to substitute purpose for tradition: that is, I believe, the profoundest change that has ever taken place in human history. We can no longer treat life as something that has trickled down to us. We have to deal with it deliberately, devise its social organization, alter its tools, formulate its method, educate and control it. In endless ways we put intention where custom has reigned. We break up routines, make decisions, choose our ends, select means.⁴⁶⁾

Here, we can notice that the messages of *A Preface to Politics* and *Drift and Mastery* overlap each other. The argument of his 1913 book that every American should acquire some wisdom through experiences is echoed in the message that they have to dispel the afraid of failure and resolutely take action to achieve self-government. If the wisdom was both the principle of political participation and the lesson from it in *A Preface to Politics*, here *mastery* is both the principle of self-government and the lesson from it. Lippmann defines

46) *Ibid.*, 265, 266-7.

the notion of mastery as the method of overcoming chaos -not by depending absolute dogmas derived from ideology, religion, or morality, but by applying hypotheses. He states as follows:

This is what mastery means: the substitution of conscious intention for unconscious striving. Civilization ... is just this constant effort to introduce plan where there has been clash, and purpose into the jungle of disordered growth.⁴⁷⁾

Lippmann knows that mastery cannot be achieved at a single stroke. It can be achieved, as the paragraph above shows, only through the “constant effort to introduce plan.” Therefore, when one faces a somewhat different result from what his hypothesis expected, he has to modify, amend, or reform his hypothesis rather than discarding it entirely. Lippmann advises the readers that “You cannot throw your-self blindly against unknown facts and trust to luck that the result will be satisfactory.” Rather, they should keep in mind the axiom that “you can have misleading ideas, but you cannot escape ideas.” If they give up every theory and cease formulating their own visions, Lippmann predicts, then “accident becomes the master.” The process of employing hypothesis, examining it, and modifying it, Lippmann calls that process as science. In other words, the *scientific spirit* is another name for mastery.

Rightly understood science is the culture under which people can live forward in the midst of complexity, and treat life not as something given but as something to be shaped. ... There is nothing accidental then in the

47) Ibid., 269.

fact that democracy in politics is the twin-brother of scientific thinking. They had to come together. As absolutism falls, science arises. It *is* self-government. For when the impulse which overthrows kings and priests and unquestioned creeds becomes self-conscious we call it science. ... The scientific spirit is the discipline of democracy, the escape from drift, the outlook of a freeman.⁴⁸⁾

The concept of hypothesis plays the central role in this process. It links two fundamental principles of science: specialty and cooperation. Little men cannot fully grasp all the aspects of big world, thus they should concentrate their attentions and interests on a specific field. All American have to be experts in their own specialties. But all experts are familiar with only a limited field, therefore, cooperation is an indispensable quality for science.

No omnipotent ruler can deal with our world, nor the scattered anarchy of individual temperaments. Mastery is inevitably a matter of cooperation, which means that a great variety of people working in different ways must find some order in their specialties.⁴⁹⁾

To relate specialty with cooperation, it is necessary that every expert should consider his theory as a provisional hypothesis. "The true scientist," Lippmann states, "is inspired by a vision without

48) *Ibid.*, 269, 270, 275-6.

49) *Ibid.*, 286; In other articles in the *New Republic*, Lippmann also shows a similar attitude on cooperation. "We do not live in a world where individual genius alone matters. We live in a world in which intelligence must be collective, in which leadership itself requires a division of labor." Lippmann, "In the Next Four Years" (3 March 1917) in *Early Writings*, 148; see also *idem.*, "Honor and Election Returns" (18 Nov. 1916).

being the victim of it.” If scientists are ready to modify their own hypotheses, then they can participate in a common experiment with other scientists cooperatively. This pragmatic attitude is the essence of what Lippmann calls scientific spirit.⁵⁰⁾

For Lippmann the hypothesis was a conceptual tool of pragmatism which equipped little men to govern the great society themselves by reconciling the latent tension between the ideal of self-government and the tendency of centralization of authority. The collectivism that he upheld in the progressive era shared these features. Lippmann was influenced by American pragmatism which taught him the lesson that treated every opinion as a provisional and tentative hypothesis, thus he was able to understand an opinion of corporations or other interest groups as one of many hypotheses, and collectivism as just an experiment to verify the hypotheses. Lippmann, in other words, believed that if interest groups present various opinions, and if people regarded the opinions not as an absolute truth but as a mere hypothesis, collectivism could be a method to establish a new order without violating principles of self-government. In *Drift and Mastery*, Lippmann attempted to search for a more democratic order by experimenting collectivism.

IV. Conclusion

Lippmann’s intellectual journey in the progressive era, as I argue in the previous chapters, can be divided into two closely related but

50) Lippmann, *Drift and Mastery*, 306-7.

still distinctive phases. In general, his journey in the progressive era had begun with revolting against old order and finished with fighting against “the chaos of a new freedom.” In *A Preface to Politics*, Lippmann believed that the task to establish a new order is possible only after accomplishing liberation from the old order. Thus, Lippmann, by referring Nietzsche, Freud, and even Marx, repeatedly called for emancipation from the tradition. In this regard, he took part in the intellectual current of ‘revolt against formalism’ in 1913. Just one year was enough for Lippmann to realize the fact that the old order was far weaker than he imagined. In 1914, Lippmann was not interested in such things as revolt, liberation, and emancipation. He came to think that liberation already had been fully accomplished. Lippmann, therefore, devoted the amount of pages of *Drift and Mastery* primarily to search for a new order. The career of Lippmann’s progressivism may be delineated as a journey from a revolt against an old order to a search for a new order.

Lippmann did not insist that a new order that he pursued would provide an absolute, perfect, and eternal principle for liberated Americans to follow. Lippmann, as intellectual historian Barry D. Riccio properly argues, well knew the fact that “a liberal order was the best that fallible men and women could hope for in an imperfect world.” In the progressive era, Lippmann, while attempting to establish a new order, kept in mind the pragmatist dictum that “politics begins and ends in the uncertainty of experience, not in abstractions.” In *A Preface to Politics* as well as *Drift and Mastery*, he pursued at the same time contested virtues, such as “disinterestedness and commitment, reason and imagination,

spontaneity and efficiency, rules and purposes, discipline and desire, and, above all, authority and freedom.”⁵¹⁾ Lippmann dispelled monumental principles which had been sustained in the old order, and never tried to reconstruct such principles. Rather, by applying the lesson of pragmatism, he continuously sought to resolve the tension between democracy and collectivism, or between the ideal of self-government and the tendency of centralization of authority. And it was the key to understanding why Lippmann made an effort to conciliate desire for order and for liberation.

■ 논문 투고일자: 2013. 04.20

■ 심사(수정)일자: 2013. 05.10

■ 게재 확정일자: 2013. 05.14

51) John P. Diggins, *The Promise of Pragmatism: Modernism and the Crisis of Knowledge and Authority* (Chicago, 1994), 325. See also James A. Nuechterlein, “The Dream of Scientific Liberalism: The New Republic and American Thought, 1914-1920,” *Review of Politics* 42, no. 2 (1980), 167-190; Marc Stears, *Progressives, Pluralists, and the Problems of the State: Ideologies of Reform in the United States and Britain, 1909-1926* (Oxford, 2002).

Abstract

From Revolt to Order: The Career of Walter Lippmann's Progressivism, 1913-1914

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This article is an attempt to reinterpret Lippmann's progressive thought. By comparing his early major work *Drift and Mastery* (1914) with his debut book *A Preface to Politics* (1913), this article argues that his intellectual journey can be divided into two closely related but yet distinctive phases. Whereas Lippmann believed in 1913 that the search for a new order should be waited until liberation from the old order was fully accomplished, in 1914 he clearly revealed the belief that the old order was already demised. In this regard, this article delineates the career of Lippmann's progressivism as the journey from a revolt against an old order to a search for a new order. By tracing his intellectual trajectory of the same era, it also maintains that Lippmann's main object was to resolve a series of tensions between desire for liberation and for order, between liberalism and collectivism, and between the ideal of self-government and the human epistemological limitations. Lippmann, employing the concept of *hypothesis*, consistently struggled with those tensions. By giving a more complex picture on the similarities and differences between *A Preface to Politics* and *Drift and Mastery*, and situating those books within its intellectual lineage, this article demonstrates both the protean and coherent nature of Lippmann's progressivism.

Key Words

Walter Lippmann, Progressivism, Pragmatism, *A Preface to Politics*, *Drift and Mastery*